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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Fifty-third session
10 March-18 April 1997

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Note by the Secretary-General

Duration and venue of the session

1. The fifty-third session of the Commission on Human Rights will be held at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 10 March to 18 April 1997. The first meeting will be convened at 11 a.m. on Monday, 10 March 1997.

Provisional agenda

2. The provisional agenda, prepared in accordance with rule 5 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, is reproduced below.

Inter-sessional and pre-sessional working groups

3. The fifty-third session of the Commission is preceded by meetings of eight working groups in connection with the following items:

(a) Item 5: An open-ended working group established to elaborate policy guidelines on structural adjustment programmes and economic, social and cultural rights (Commission decision 1996/103, Economic and Social Council decision 1996/289) is scheduled to meet from 3 to 7 March 1997;

(b) Item 6: An intergovernmental working group of experts established to elaborate a strategy for the implementation and promotion of the right to development (Commission resolution 1996/15, Economic and Social Council decision 1996/258) is scheduled to meet from 4 to 15 November 1996;

(c) Item 8 (d): An open-ended working group established to elaborate a draft optional protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Commission resolution 1996/37, Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/22) met from 14 to 25 October 1996.

(d) Item 10 (b): The Working Group on Situations, composed of five members of the Commission, is scheduled to meet from 3 to 7 March 1997 to examine situations referred to the Commission by the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1503 (XLVIII) of 27 May 1970 (Commission resolution 1990/55, Economic and Social Council resolution 1990/41);

(e) Item 20: An open-ended working group established to draft a declaration on the right and responsibility of individuals, groups and organs of society to promote and protect universally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms (Commission resolution 1996/81, Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/25) is scheduled to meet from 24 to 28 February 1997;

(f) Item 21: An open-ended working group for the elaboration of a draft optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on involvement of children in armed conflicts (Commission resolution 1996/85, Economic and Social Council decision 1996/288) is scheduled to meet from 20 to 31 January 1997;

(g) Item 21 (d): An open-ended inter-sessional working group for the elaboration of a draft optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (Commission resolution 1996/85, Economic and Social Council decision 1996/288) is scheduled to meet from 3 to 14 February 1997;

(h) Item 24: An open-ended inter-sessional working group established to elaborate a draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples (Commission resolution 1996/38, Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/23) met from 21 October to 1 November 1996.

4. Any decisions and resolutions affecting the provisional agenda of the fifty-third session of the Commission that may be adopted by the General Assembly at its fifty-first session will be brought to the attention of the Commission in an addendum to the present document. The annotations to the items listed in the provisional agenda will also be issued in an addendum.

Provisional agenda

1. Election of officers.

2. Adoption of the agenda.

3. Organization of the work of the session.

4. Question of the violation of human rights in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine.

5. Question of the realization in all countries of the economic, social and cultural rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and study of special problems which the developing countries face in their efforts to achieve these human rights, including:

   (a) Problems related to the right to enjoy an adequate standard of living; foreign debt, economic adjustment policies and their effects on the full enjoyment of human rights and, in particular, on the implementation of the Declaration on the Right to Development;

   (b) The effects of the existing unjust international economic order on the economies of the developing countries, and the obstacle that this represents for the implementation of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

6. Question of the realization of the right to development.

7. The right of peoples to self-determination and its application to peoples under colonial or alien domination or foreign occupation.

8. Question of the human rights of all persons subjected to any form of detention or imprisonment, in particular:

   (a) Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;

   (b) Status of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;

   (c) Question of enforced or involuntary disappearances;

   (d) Question of a draft optional protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

9. Further promotion and encouragement of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the question of the programme and methods of work of the Commission:

   (a) Alternative approaches and ways and means within the United Nations system for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms;

   (b) National institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights;

   (c) Coordinating role of the Centre for Human Rights within the United Nations bodies and machinery dealing with the promotion and protection of human rights;

   (d) Human rights, mass exoduses and displaced persons.

10. Question of the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in any part of the world, with particular reference to colonial and other dependent countries and territories, including:

   (a) Question of human rights in Cyprus;

   (b) Study of situations which appear to reveal a consistent pattern of gross violations of human rights as provided in Commission resolution 8 (XXIII) and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1235 (XLII) and 1503 (XLVIII): report of the Working Group on Situations established by Economic and Social Council resolution 1990/41 of 25 May 1990.

11. Measures to improve the situation and ensure the human rights and dignity of all migrant workers.

12. Human rights and scientific and technological developments.

13. Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination.

14. Status of the International Covenants on Human Rights.

15. Effective functioning of bodies established pursuant to United Nations human rights instruments.

16. Report of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities on its forty-seventh session.

17. Rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities.

18. Advisory services in the field of human rights.

19. Implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief.

20. Drafting of a declaration on the right and responsibility of individuals, groups and organs of society to promote and protect universally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms.

21. Rights of the child, including:

(a) Status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

(b) Report of the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography;

(c) Programme of Action for the Elimination of the Exploitation of Child Labour;

(d) Question of a draft optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, as well as the basic measures needed for their prevention and eradication.

22. Follow-up to the World Conference on Human Rights.

23. The question of conscientious objection to military service.

24. Indigenous issues.

25. Draft provisional agenda for the fifty-fourth session of the Commission.

26. Report to the Economic and Social Council on the fifty-third session of the Commission.